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## NEWS RELEASE

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January 1, 2003

### **Fort Brown and Brownsville Stations Enhance Operations**

*Statistics Indicate Apprehensions Increase After Holidays*

**McALLEN, Texas** - In preparation for the anticipated increase of illegal entries of undocumented immigrants due to the annual migration patterns, the Fort Brown and Brownsville Border Patrol Stations are preparing and coordinating comprehensive efforts that are designed to enhance current operations, such as "Operation Rio Grande", to deter and prevent any illegal entries in the Brownsville, Texas, area of the McAllen Sector.

In April of 1997, the McAllen Border Patrol Sector began "Operation Rio Grande", marking the beginning of a new look and attitude of the U. S. Border Patrol in the McAllen Sector. As a result of Operation Rio Grande, the U. S. Border Patrol's McAllen Sector has increased its manpower and tactical infrastructure almost threefold, which has enabled the Sector to increase pressure upon the normal routes of travel used by undocumented immigrants, smugglers of undocumented immigrants, also known as "coyotes", smugglers of narcotics, and the border bandits that prey upon the unsuspecting undocumented immigrants. Since its inception, yearly apprehension statistics have decreased significantly.

The McAllen Border Patrol Sector normally sees an increase in apprehensions and attempted illegal entries during the month of January. This is primarily due to the return of undocumented migrants who have returned to their native countries in the previous months. This trend usually continues into February and March. McAllen Sector's annual apprehensions have decreased steadily since the inception of Operation Rio Grande in 1997. Operation Rio Grande is now entering its sixth year. Statistics indicate a notable increase in apprehensions in the month of January as compared to those in the month of December.

In preparation for this anticipated increase of illegal activity, the Fort Brown and Brownsville Border Patrol Stations, along with members of the Border Coordination Initiative, such as the U. S. Coast Guard and other federal agencies, have begun a concerted combined effort. The Fort Brown and Brownsville Border Patrol Stations will be utilizing such modern technology as Remote and Mobile Video Surveillance Cameras with infrared capabilities, Night Vision Devices and Remote Seismic Sensing Devices. The stations will visually increase patrols along the Rio Grande River, train yards and the local transportation hubs to dissuade any attempts to enter the country illegally.

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